

Pyncheon House - 518 ADAMS AVE.
Huntsville, Ala.

Madison Co.

HABS No. 16-430

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 16

Historic American Buildings Survey
E. Walter Burkhardt, District Officer
Ala. Polytechnic Inst., Auburn, Ala.

Project #16-430
THE PYNCHON HOME
518 Adams Avenue
Huntsville, Alabama

HISTORICAL DATA:

Built in 1835.

Ownership:

Mrs. Susan Clarke, in 1835, bought the land from Benjamin Patterson and James J. Pleasants for \$1,700. She built her home the same year.

Mrs. Pamela Bibb bought this home in 1844, paying for it \$10,000.

Mrs. Margaret McClung was the third owner of the house, 1859. The same year she sold.

John J. Fackler purchased this home three days after Mrs. McClung became its owner. He paid to her \$2,000 more than she had paid for the place.

Elizabeth M. Fackler inherited this home from her husband, John J. Fackler, in 1871. Mrs. Fackler died in December of the same year, leaving the property to her daughter, Sarah Pynchon.

Sarah Fackler Pynchon inherited this home from her mother, Mrs. Elizabeth M. Fackler, in 1871.

Calvin Morgan Fackler, of Danville, Kentucky, inherited this property from his aunt, Mrs. Pynchon, in 1924. He still owns the place.

Present Occupant: M. H. May.

Mrs. Susan Clarke:

Widow of William Clarke, once a captain in the famous Virginia Blue Regiment. Following the War of 1812, Captain Clarke and his wife Susan came to Alabama from Richmond, Virginia. "The Clarks first settled in a log cabin near Shelter Caverns, but later removed to a large plantation near Mooresville, which the captain managed so well that his fortune increased steadily." Captain Clarke died in 1833.

Not caring to stay out on the plantation after

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her husband's death, Mrs. Clarke purchased this lot in Huntsville in 1835. Here she built her home.

Mrs. Pamela Bibb:

Daughter of Robert and Sara Watkins Thompson, Mrs. Bibb's parents had migrated from Virginia and settled at Belle Mina.

Wife of Thomas Bibb, second governor of the State of Alabama. She died in 1859.

Mrs. Margaret McClung:

Widow of Colonel James W. McClung, legislator from Madison County, brother of Alexander McClung the noted duellist.

John J. Fackler:

Cotton commission merchant from New Orleans. Mr. Fackler remodeled the home, adding many rooms until he had a nineteen room house. This was the great period of this homes history.

"Fackler had five children, Gypsy, Sarah Morgan, wife of Dr. Pynchon, John, William, and Calvin. No party was too lavish for them and their friends, no festivity too frequent or too grand to overshadow the beauty of the home.

"Old residents of the county describe with pleasant recollections the masquerades and cotillions they attended there. The noise of string instruments, the odor of perfume and flowers, the spirit of the hoop-skirt and smartness of the swallowtail coat made the mansion rock with gayety."

Grounds:

The grounds around this home were laid out by an English gardener. The terrace overlooks a sunken garden. Tall trees shade the whole house. Boxwood borders the walk. In front stand two English yew trees, each nearly a hundred years old and rarities for this section.

Source of Material: Historic Homes, by Pat Jones,
Huntsville Times, April 23, 1933.

Reviewed 1936 by H.C.F.

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ARCHITECTURAL MERIT AND DATA:

The reason for selection of this structure is that it represents another type of Huntsville^{house} and, indirectly, of the Tennessee Valley house. It shows marked Virginia influence and not the forceful Greek Revival inspiration. The Greek Revival is only apparent in mouldings and the Ionic capitals of the one story wood entrance porch and the window heads. The side gable treatment, with two fireplace chimneys, is of marked interest and uniqueness. Extensive two story slave quarters are still in existence in the rear of the house. The interior is surprisingly crude and not in consistency with the exterior.

Source of Material:

E. Walter Burkhardt, District Administrator, HABS,
Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama.

Pat Jones, Historic Homes, published in the Huntsville
Times, April 23, 1933.

Revised 1936 by H.C.F.

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